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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/665,526	09/19/2000	Steven G. LeMay	IGT1P018	5846

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EXAMINER

COBURN, CORBETT B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3714

DATE MAILED: 01/13/2004

18

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/665,526

Applicant(s)

LEMAY ET AL.

Examiner

Corbett B. Coburn

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17, 19-29, 41-43 and 49-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 49 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17, 19-29, 41-43 and 50-55 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 September 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the messaging between players, reminder service and locator service must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-8, 10-17, 21-23, 25-29, & 38-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker et al (US Patent Number 6,113,495) in view of Internet Relay Chat (See Caraballo et al., *The IRC Prelude*, 1 June 2000, [ttp://www.irchelp.org/irchelp/new2irc.html](http://www.irchelp.org/irchelp/new2irc.html))

Claims 1, 19, 42, 50: Walker teaches a gaming machine with a display device (reels 332, 334, & 336); a master game controller (310) that controls one or more games played on the gaming machine and presents a game outcome presentation (images) the display device (reels 332, 334, & 336). There is an input device (370) for selecting an

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entertainment source (Abstract). Video display area (346) is an output device configured to output entertainment during selected operational modes of the gaming machine. There is an output device configured to output audio-formatted entertainment content from the selected entertainment content source. (Col 7, 58-61) The entertainment content is independent of the outcome presentation presented on the gaming machines. Walker teaches a video display device (346) coupled to the CPU, which is in a main cabinet of the gaming machine. (Fig 3) Walker teaches that this video display device (346) can be used to display both the reels of the slot machine (Col 7, 17-23) and the multimedia information (Col 7, 58-61). Walker teaches displaying a list of one or more entertainment sources. (Fig 8, 830) The system receives a selection from the list. (840) The entertainment content is output to the display. (850) The entertainment content is independent of the game outcome presentation. Walker teaches that one of the entertainment sources may be the Internet. (Col 5, 44-46) The Internet is well known to contain information about sports scores, stock quotes, news, etc.

While Walker discloses Internet access, Walker does not specifically disclose sending messages between users of the gaming machines. Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is a well known function of the Internet. IRC allows users to send messages to other users and receive messages from other users. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Walker in view of IRC to allow users to send and receive messages to and from other gaming machine users in order to carry out Walker's suggestion that users should be given access to the Internet with all of the Internet's known functionality.

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Claim 2: The output device is a monitor.

Claim 3: The entertainment content source is a server. (110)

Claim 4: The media software application is a web browser. (Col 5, 54-60)

Claim 5: The input device (370) is a touch screen. (Col 7, 29-31)

Claims 6, 28: The entertainment content may include a web page. (Col 5, 44-60)

Claims 7, 29: The game may be a video slot game. (Abstract)

Claim 8: There is a first communication interface (Fig 2, 265) that allows the gaming machine to communicate with an entertainment source outside of the gaming machine.

Claim 10: The entertainments content is initiated when game play is initiated on the gaming machine. (Fig 8)

Claim 11: Access to the entertainment content is time dependent on an indicia of credit amount, wager amount, or game playing history. (Col 9, 48- Col 10, 4)

Claim 12: The information content is provided according to a player information profile. (Col 10, 17-24)

Claim 13: Fig 3 shows communication through a second communication interface with an output device (Display 362) located outside of the gaming machine.

Claim 14: Figure 1 clearly shows the gaming machine (300) connected to an entertainment service network.

Claims 15, 43: Walker provides one or more predetermined conditions that a player must satisfy in order to access the entertainment content of the gaming machine. (Col 2, 39-60) When the player satisfies the condition, the entertainment content is output to an output device. (Fig 7A) The entertainment content is independent of the game outcome

presentation (spinning the reels) of the game. Walker teaches that the entertainment content can be accessed in exchange for cash or player reward points (i.e., satisfaction of a predetermined condition) on the gaming machine regardless of any current level of play. (Col 2, 57-60) Thus, the entertainment content can be accessed without requiring a game of chance be played prior to accessing the entertainment content since a player could purchase access without any current level of play.

Claims 16, 25: The entertainment content may be displayed on the output device (346) while the game outcome is displayed on the display device (332, 334, 336). (Col 7, 4-8 & 57-61)

Claim 17, 27: Walker teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Walker teaches interactive entertainment content – web pages (Col 5, 44-60) Walker teaches player input through an input device in order to browse a web page. (Col 5, 52-54)

Claims 41: Walker discloses an entertainment content source providing entertainment content independent of a game outcome presentation presented on a gaming machine. (Abstract) The entertainment source is adapted for operation only during selected operational modes of the gaming machine – when casino specified criteria are met. (Fig 7A, 715) The entertainment source is a server. (Fig 1, 110)

Claim 21: Walker makes it clear that the determined indicia of credit amount is independent of the wager on the game. (Col 9, 48-66)

Claim 22: Walker teaches receiving player-tracking information (Fig 4) prior to receiving the selection and allowing access to the entertainment content sources based on the player tracking information. (Col 9, 48-66)

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Claim 23: Walker teaches allowing a player to buy access to entertainment content sources for a period of time; comparing the access time to the total time bought; and terminating access to the entertainment content source when the access time exceeds the total time. (Figs 7B & C)

Claim 24: Walker teaches displaying a list of available premium entertainment services to the player. This is information describing the entertainment content available on the entertainment content sources. Obviously, before this information can be displayed, it must first be loaded onto the computer.

Claim 53: Walker teaches electronic messages from the casino (i.e., service employees) to the person via the gaming machine. (Fig 7B, 760)

Claim 54: IRC is a function of the Internet, therefore, no player tracking system is required to use IRC to send messages between players.

Claim 55: IRC messages include text.

4. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker and IRC as applied to claim 8 above in view of Dabrowski (US Patent Number 6,379,246).

Claim 9: Walker & IRC teach the invention substantially as claimed, but fails to teach interposing a firewall between the gaming machine and the Internet. It is extremely well known that a firewall helps provide security, thus helping to prevent hackers gaining access to a system. Hackers can cause damage in a number of ways. They may, for instance, cause a computer system to shut down. This would cost a casino money because a slot machine that is down cannot be played. Hackers may even access accounting data, stealing from the casino or from players. This would be a public

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relations disaster. Dabrowski, an invention in the same field of endeavor, teaches using a firewall to provide protection. (Col 3, 60-62) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have used a firewall to limit access to the gaming machine via the first communications interface in order to protect the casino from hackers.

5. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker and IRC as applied to claim 19 in view of official notice.

Claim 20: Walker and IRC teach the invention substantially as claimed. Walker teaches determining an indicia of credit amount for the selected entertainment content prior to outputting entertainment content. (Col 9, 64-66) Walker teaches displaying a message on the display device notifying the player of the determined indicia of credit amount for the selected entertainment content source. (Col 11, 24-34) Walker teaches initiating the selected entertainment content when the required indicia of credit amount is available on the gaming machine. (Col 10, 13-24) Walker does not specifically teach displaying the message prior to providing the entertainment content. Without such a message, the player would not know how to gain access to the entertainment content. Examiner takes official notice of the almost universal practice of telling potential customers how much goods and services cost prior to providing such goods and services. From gum to yachts, potential purchasers are told the price of items before they purchase. Certainly, in the gaming industry, it is notoriously well known to provide the potential customer with the price of entertainment (i.e., the minimum bet amount) prior to the purchase by the customer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

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invention to have displayed a message on the display device notifying the player of the required indicia of credit amount prior to granting access to the entertainment content in order to inform the player how to gain access to the entertainment content.

6. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker and IRC as applied to claim 25 above, and further in view of Fraley (US Patent Number 4,712,799).

Claim 26: Walker & IRC teach the invention substantially as claimed. Walker teaches a display device (332-336) for displaying the game outcome and an output device (345) for displaying entertainment content. Output device (345) is a video display device. Walker does not specifically teach the display device (332-336) being a video display device.

Displaying game output on video is notoriously well known in the art. Fraley teaches one example. Video displays are easier to maintain than mechanical reels because they have fewer moving parts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the display device be a video display device in order to provide for ease of maintenance.

7. Claims 50-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of www.yahoo.com.

Claims 50: Walker teaches a gaming machine with a display device (reels 332, 334, & 336); a master game controller (310) that controls one or more games played on the gaming machine and presents a game outcome presentation (images) the display device (reels 332, 334, & 336). There is an input device (370) for selecting an entertainment source (Abstract). Video display area (346) is an output device configured to output entertainment during selected operational modes of the gaming machine. There is an

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output device configured to output audio-formatted entertainment content from the selected entertainment content source. (Col 7, 58-61) The entertainment content is independent of the outcome presentation presented on the gaming machines. Walker teaches a video display device (346) coupled to the CPU, which is in a main cabinet of the gaming machine. (Fig 3) Walker teaches that this video display device (346) can be used to display both the reels of the slot machine (Col 7, 17-23) and the multimedia information (Col 7, 58-61). Walker teaches displaying a list of one or more entertainment sources. (Fig 8, 830) The system receives a selection from the list. (840) The entertainment content is output to the display. (850) The entertainment content is independent of the game outcome presentation. Walker teaches that one of the entertainment sources may be the Internet. (Col 5, 44-46) The Internet is well known to contain information about sports scores, stock quotes, news, etc. At least in 1999, Yahoo.com provided this information. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Walker to include information about sports scores, stock quotes, news, etc. in view of www.yahoo.com in order to carry out Walker's suggestion that the player be given access to the Internet. (Examiner realizes that Walker is not actually being modified. Access to the Internet inherently means access to sports scores, stock quotes, news, etc. But one must use the prescribed form when making the rejection.)

Claim 51: Yahoo has a calendar feature that allows users to enter upcoming events scheduled for the person. Yahoo then sends a reminder as the event approaches.

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Claim 52: The person may enter any event in the Yahoo calendar. This includes dinner reservations.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claim 49 is allowed.

9. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

A thorough search of the prior art fails to disclose any reference or references, which, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest, in combination with the other limitations, one of the entertainment content sources is a locator service allowing a person at the gaming machine to locate via the gaming machine a first person at a first gaming machine.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-17, 19-29 & 41-43 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Falciglia (US Patent Number 5,971,849) teaches chat on a gaming machine.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Corbett B. Coburn whose telephone number is (703) 305-3319.

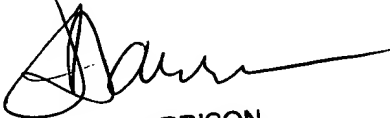
The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30, Monday-Friday, alternate Fridays off.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Hughes can be reached on (703) 308-1806. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.


cbc


JESSICA HARRISON
PRIMARY EXAMINER